THE TRUTH ABOUT CANADIANS

Topline summary.
Methodology

In order to discover the truth about Canadians, we first had to understand:

- The changing context of Canada
- Affinities rather than demographics that reveal alignment and separation among Canadians
- Common truths that influence the behaviour and expectations of Canadians

We worked in three phases between March and August 2016:
- The quantitative phase set the groundwork with an online 2505-person bilingual nationwide survey among Canadians 18+.
- The qualitative phase allowed us to dig deeper into specific issues amongst specific Canadians, with exploratory workshops conducted in-person (Montreal and Toronto) and online (nation-wide).
- The interview phase gave us expert perspectives from 18 leading Canadian industry and academic experts who were consulted via phone or in-person.

The study is iterative in nature. This is the launch and the baseline for further exploration on The Truth About Canadians that will continue into 2017 and beyond.
At the start of 2016, we took a fresh look at what really drives Canadians and what they want out of brands. We avoided replicating or building on existing studies. We wanted a more unique and fundamental understanding of how Canadians view themselves and the world. We set out to uncover what is truly important – what unites, divides and excites us.

The goal was simple. We wanted to help marketers play more meaningful roles in the lives of Canadians.

In partnership with Ipsos Public Affairs, Canada’s leading research body, we developed a methodology that would not just reveal these truths, but help us understand the motivations behind them.

Here is what you will find. In Section One: New Context, we establish the factors that have shaped the Canada we live in now. Section Two: New Affinities reveals five new segments of Canadians based on the values, opinions and outlooks they share. Then in Section Three, we review five truths about Canadians that drive the marketing agenda. Finally, we conclude there is a New Canada and new Canadians.

Canada and Canadians have changed. Old stereotypes and assumptions are growing inaccurate and can be misleading. We discovered there is a defined and tangible Canadian dream that is being pursued confidently by Canadians. This has profound implications for marketing in Canada. It requires us to think and act differently. It means understanding the truth about Canadians.
The context that has shaped Canada Today is manifest in new segments of Canadians. What emerged from our research was a picture of five distinctive groups, aligned not around geography but around shared values and attitudes. We discovered that Canadians are redefining themselves so that the very notion of what it means to be “Canadian” is changing.
Knowing our consumers better makes us better marketers

The benefit of this segmentation, this more accurate reflection of Canadians today based on their shared values and attitudes, is that it will make us sharper. We will know, as marketers, who buys what for what reason. And we’ll know why. Most importantly, understanding these segments will help us better understand our brands – who we are, who we want to be, who we want to attract, and who we want to be meaningful to.

Understanding what drives Canadians helps identify what it is they hold in common. This makes our marketing more efficient and effective. Our research identified five supporting truths shared across the segments of Canadians. Knowing these will help us reach the most desirable Canadians faster and with greater relevancy.

FIVE TRUTHS

ONE:

CANADA IS THE NEW HOME OF THE BRAVE

TWO:

EMBRACE YOUR CANADIANA.
EVEN IF YOU’RE NOT A CANADIAN BRAND

THREE:

ONE-OFFS AREN’T ENOUGH.
WE WANT BRAND EXPERIENCES ALL THE TIME

FOUR:

CANADIANS WANT TO GIVE BACK, BUT EXPECT BRANDS TO ACTUALLY DO IT

FIVE:

DIGITAL WILL BE THE PORTAL TO THE NEW PHYSICAL COMMUNITIES
More opinionated than Americans

To our surprise, we found that Canadians are actually more comfortable with having and expressing an opinion than Americans.

Q: It’s important to express yourself, even if your opinions are unpopular

74% 69%
Canada USA

“I would rather be considered a true individual than fit in with the crowd”

72% 72.5% 72% 64%
Canada Spain Philippines USA

36%

of Canadians are likely to recommend a brand that’s Canadian.
93% of Canadians prefer a life filled with great experiences over beautiful possessions.

71% of Canadian’s say government has a responsibility to help take care of the less fortunate.

29% of Canadians have changed a purchase behaviour/boycotted a product/company because of social, environmental or ethical concerns.

85% It’s better to play within the system to succeed.

77% of Canadians say that making a positive contribution to society is a factor that guides their everyday lives.

Only 18% of Canadians feel strongly connected to their physical communities.
For the full executive summary of this study, please contact Mary.Chambers@mccann.com